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**What is Gender-Based Violence?**

* Gender-based violence (GBV) is any act of violence or abuse which is directed at an individual or group on the basis of their gender.
* It is important to note, therefore, that both women and men can be made targets of gender-based violence. However, it has been widely acknowledged that the majority of persons affected by gender-based violence are women and girls, as a result of unequal distribution of power in society between women and men. Further, female victims of violence suffer specific consequences as a result of gender discrimination.
* Gender‐based violence against women is violence that is directed against a woman because she is a woman or that affects women disproportionately.[[1]](#footnote-1)
* “Violence against women” is understood as a violation of human rights and a form of discrimination against women. It is all acts of gender‐based violence that result in, or are likely to result in, physical, sexual, psychological or economic harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life.[[2]](#footnote-2)
* Violence against women and girls is rooted in unequal power relations between men and women, and the underlying beliefs and values which accompany this, often manifesting as a means of control.
* Gender-based violence occurs in every culture and context around the world. It can be carried out by a wide range of people, including: partners; family members; those in the community; strangers; friends; those in positions of authority; armed groups; and the state.
1. European Institute for Gender Equality, [*What is Gender-Based Violence?*](https://eige.europa.eu/gender-based-violence/what-is-gender-based-violence), accessed 5 September 2018. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)